

# The Doctor's Dilemma

By Hesba Stretton

## CHAPTER XVIII.—(Continued.)

"Why, Martin," she said, averting her face from me, "you know I should never consent to marry you, with the idea of my caring most for that girl. No, I could never do that. If I believed you would ever think of me as you used to before you saw her, well, I would be true to you. But is there any hope of that?"

"Let us be frank with one another," I answered; "tell me, is there any one else whom you would marry if I released you from this promise, which was only given, perhaps, to soothe my mother's last hours?"

"Yes," answered Johanna, whilst Julia hid her face in her hands, "she would marry my brother."

"Captain Carey?" I fairly gasped for breath. Such an idea had never once occurred to me, though I knew she had been spending most of her time with the Darceys at the Vale. Captain Carey to marry! To go and live in our house! I was struck dumb, and fancied that I had heard wrongly.

If Julia wished for revenge—and when I had not revenge exacted to a jilted woman—she had it now. I was as crestfallen as an amazed, almost as miserable as she had been. Yet I had no one to blame but she had. How could I blame her for preferring Captain Carey's love to my poor affections?"

"Julia," I said, after a long silence, and speaking as calmly as I could, "do you love Captain Carey?"

"That is not a fair question to ask," answered Johanna. "I have not been treacherous to you. I scarcely know how it has all come about. But my brother has never asked Julia if she loves him; for we wished to see you first, and hear how you felt about Olivia. You say you shall never love again as you love her. Set Julia free, then, quite free, to accept my brother or reject him. Be generous, be yourself, Martin."

"I will," I said; "my dear Julia, you are as free as air from all obligation to me. You have been very good and very true to me. If Captain Carey is as good and true to you, as I believe he will be, you will be a very happy woman—happier than you would ever be with me."

"And you will not make yourself unhappy about it?" asked Julia, looking up.

"No," I answered cheerfully; "I shall be a merry old bachelor, and visit you and Captain Carey, when we are all old folks. Never mind me, Julia; I never was good enough for you. I shall be very glad to know that you are happy."

Yet when I found myself in the street—for I made my escape as soon as I could get away from them—I felt as if everything worth living for were slipping away from me. My mother and Olivia were gone, and I had lost Julia, breaking me. I did not grieve for the new happiness. There was neither jealousy nor envy in my feelings toward my antagonist. But in some way I felt that I had lost a great deal since I entered their drawing room two hours ago.

"He will see you," she said, fixing me herself with a steady gaze of curling hair.

I was anxious to see Olivia's husband, partly from the intense aversion I felt instinctively toward him. He was lying back in an old, worn-out easy-chair, with a woman's shawl thrown across his shoulders, for the night was chilly. His face had the first sickly hue and emaciation of the disease, and was probably refined by it. It was a handsome, regular, well-cut face, narrow across the brows, with thin, firm lips, and eyes perfect in shape, but cold and glittering as steel. I knew afterward that he was fifteen years older than Olivia. Across his knees lay a shaggy, starved-looking cat, which he held fast, and entertained himself by teasing and tormenting it. He scrutinized me as keenly as I did him.

"I believe we are in some sort connected, Dr. Martin Dobree," he said; "my half-sister, Kate Daltry, is married to your father, Dr. Dobree."

"Yes," I answered shortly. The subject was eminently disagreeable to me, and I had no wish to pursue it with him.

"Ah! she will make him a happy man," he continued mockingly; "you are not yourself married, I believe, Dr. Martin Dobree?"

I took no notice whatever of his remark, but passed on to formal inquiries concerning his health. My class study of his malady helped me here. I could assist him to describe and localize his symptoms, and I soon found that the disease was in a very early stage.

"You have a better grip of it than Lowry," he said. "I feel as if I were

made of glass, and you could look through me. Can you cure me?"

"I will do my best," I answered.

"So you all say," he muttered, "and the best is generally good for nothing. You see I care less about getting over it than my wife does. She is very anxious for my recovery."

"Your wife!" I repeated in utter surprise; "you are Richard Foster, I believe?"

"Certainly," he replied.

"Does your wife know of your present illness?" I inquired.

"To be sure," he answered; "let me introduce you to Mrs. Richard Foster."

The woman looked at me with flashing eyes and a mocking smile, while Mr. Foster indulged himself with exhorting a long and plaintive mew from the poor cat on his knees.

"I cannot understand," I said, "I did not know how to continue my speech. Though they might choose to pass as husband and wife among strangers, they could hardly expect to impose upon me."

"Ah! I see you do not," said Mr. Foster, with a visible sneer. "Olivia is dead."

"Olivia dead!" I exclaimed.

"You were not aware of it?" he said. "I am afraid I have been too sudden. Kate tells you you were in love with my first wife, and sacrificed a most eligible match for her. Would it be too late to open fresh negotiations with your cousin? You see I know all your family history."

"When did Olivia die?" I inquired, though my tongue felt dry and parched, and the room, with his florid face, was swimming giddily before my eyes.

"When was it, Carry?" he asked, turning to his wife.

"We heard she was dead on the first of October," she answered. "You married me the next day."

"Ah, yes!" he said; "Olivia had been dead to me for more than twelve months, and the moment I was free I married her, Dr. Martin. It was quite legal."

"But what proof have you?" I asked still incredulous, yet with a heart so heavy that it could hardly rouse itself to hope.

"Carry, you have those letters," said Richard Foster.

"Here are the proofs," said Mrs. Foster.

She put into my hand an ordinary certificate of death, signed by J. J. M. D. It stated that the deceased, Olivia Foster, had died of inflammation of the lungs. Accompanying this was a letter written in a good handwriting, purporting to be from a clergyman or minister, who had attended Olivia in her fatal illness. He said that she had desired him to keep the place of her death and burial a secret, and to forward no more than the official certificate of the former event. This letter was signed E. J. M. No clue was given by either document as to the place where they were written.

"Are you not satisfied," asked Foster.

"No," I replied; "how is it, if Olivia

is dead, that you have not taken possession of her property?"

"A shrewd question," he said, frowning. "Why am I in these cursed poor holdings? Why am I as poor as Job, when there are twenty thousand pounds of my wife's estate lying unclaimed? My sweet, angelic Olivia left no will, or none in my favor, you may be sure; and by her father's will, if she died intestate or without children, his property goes to build almshouses, or some confounded nonsense, in Melbourne. All she bequeaths to me is this ring, which I gave to her on our wedding day, curse her!"

He held out his hand, on the little finger of which shone a diamond, that might, as far as I knew, be the one I had once seen in Olivia's possession.

"Perhaps you do not know," he continued, "that it was on this very point, the making of her will, or securing her property to me in some way, that my wife took offense and ran away from me. Carry was just a little too hard upon her, and I was away in Paris. But consider, I expected to be left penniless, just as you see me left, and Carry was determined to prevent it."

"Then you are sure of her death?" I said.

"So sure," he replied calmly, "that we were married the next day. Olivia's letter to me, as well as those papers, was conclusive of her identity. Would you like to see it?"

Mrs. Foster gave me a slip of paper, on which were written a few lines. The words looked faint, and grew fainter to my eyes as I read them. They were without doubt Olivia's writing.

"I know that you are poor, and I send you all I can spare—the ring you once gave to me. I am even poorer than yourself, but I have just enough for my last necessities."

There was no more to be said or done. Conviction had been brought home to me. I rose to take my leave, and Foster held out his hand to me, perhaps with a kindly intention. Olivia's ring was glittering on it, and I could not take it into mine.

"Well, well!" he said, "I understand; I am sorry for you. Come again, Dr. Martin Dobree. If you know of any remedy for my case, you are no true man if you do not try it."

I went down the narrow staircase,

"That would be unjust to Julia," I interrupted. "She must not be sacrificed to me any longer. I do not suppose I shall ever marry."

"You must marry, Martin," she interrupted in her turn, and speaking emphatically; "you are altogether unfitted for a bachelor's life. It is all very well for Dr. John Senior, who has never known a woman's companionship, and who can do without it. But it is misery to you—this cold, colorless life. No. Of all men I ever knew, you are the least fitted for a single life."

"Perhaps I am," I admitted, as I recalled my longing for some sign of womanhood about our bachelor dwelling.

(To be continued.)

## NOAH'S ARK A MODERN SHIP.

Proof that the Shipbuilding Industry Flourished Before His Time.

Another popular notion has been upset. For centuries it has been supposed that Father Noah was the first shipbuilder of the world and that the ark in which he saved his family from drowning was the first vessel that "plowed the raging main." This supposition has been found to be erroneous, for there exist paintings of Egyptian vessels immensely older than the date 2840 B. C., usually assigned to the ark, being, indeed, probably between seventy and eighty centuries old. Moreover, there are now in existence in Egypt boats which were built about the period the ark was constructed. These are, however, small craft, about thirty-three feet long, seven feet or eight feet wide, and two and a half feet to three feet deep. They were discovered six years ago by the eminent French Egyptologist, M. J. De Morgan, in brick vaults near Cairo and were probably funeral boats.

They are constructed of three-inch acacia and sycamore planks, dovetailed together and fastened with trenails. They have floors but no ribs, and though nearly 5,000 years old they hold together after their supports had been removed. These boats may be considered side by side with the better known, but much more modern, Viking ship, which is now to be seen in a shed at Christiana. This craft was discovered in 1880 in a funeral mound, so that we owe both these existing examples of extremely ancient ships to the funeral customs of countries so dissimilar as Egypt and Norway.

**Heron Nests in the Maine Woods.**

There are three known heron colonies in New England. One of them is on the peninsula just to the north of Sebastic Lake. On a point of land reaching into the pond is a growth of tall silver birches, and there are at least 100 nests in the tops of these trees. The trees are tall, without limbs for forty feet or more from the ground. It is a well known fact that herons never build a nest in a tree with limbs much less than forty feet from the earth. The nests are constructed from small sticks, some up to an inch in diameter. The nest is at least two feet across, and the eggs are a trifle smaller than a hen's egg and of a pale blue color. The old birds go long distances on their foraging trips, in some cases forty and fifty miles. The birds of this species about Moosehead Lake and around the ponds miles to the south all make their way to this particular colony at night. Standing on the point one can see the birds coming from all directions during the period in which they feed their young.—New York Tribune.

**Java's Great Explosion.**

Dr. Eugene Murray-Aaron calls the eruption of the volcano Krakatau in Java "the greatest explosion of modern times." He says:

"It is quite safe to say, when we are asked the question as to which of all the mighty manifestations of God's power in this world thus far within the ken of science has been the most stupendous, the most all-overwhelming, that the terrific annihilation of Krakatau, in 1883, surpasses all else. A smoke that encircled the globe, a wave that traveled 7,500 miles, a sound heard 3,000 miles afar and an air shock hurled three around the earth—what more can be sought as testimony to the pent-up energies beneath our very feet?"

**The Densest Population.**

The greatest density of the population in the world is claimed for Bombay, and is only disputed by Agra. The population of Bombay amounts to 700 persons per acre in certain areas, and in these sections the street area only occupies one-fourth of the whole. If the entire population massed in the streets for any purpose, the density would equal 3,040 persons per acre.

**Clock for Theatrical Use.**

To judge the different numbers of a program a newly designed clock has a rotatable dial plate, which can be perforated at the proper places to engage hooked rods which fall into the holes in the dial, and are pulled a short distance to make electrical connections with bells or indicators located in convenient places.

**A New Gun.**

A centrifugal gun, discharging 30,000 bullets a minute, has been invented by an English engineer. The bullets are poured into a case from a hopper, and guided into a disk three feet in diameter, revolving in the case at the rate of 15,000 revolutions a minute. They are discharged from the edge of the disk.

**Man's Temperature.**

Man's ordinary temperature is 98.6 degrees when in good health; that of a small 75 degrees, and of a chicken 111 degrees.

We have remarked that soon after it is announced that a man seems to drink at the fountain of perpetual youth he dies.

The most successful nation is determined.

**It Records Sound.**

E. Ruhmer has invented a sound recorder on a different principle from that of the Pausen telegraphone. He photographs on a moving film a sensitive flame, vibrating to the sounds, and produces on the film a band of varying intensity. Light is then projected through this band to a selenium cell in circuit with a battery and telephone. The variations of intensity of the light vary the resistance of the cell and accordingly increase the strength of the electric current, thus reproducing the original sound.

## MRS. H. F. ROBERTS

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Don't hesitate to write to Mrs. Pinkham. She will understand your case perfectly, and will treat you with kindness. Her advice is free, and the address is Lynn, Mass.

If one considers that between five and six hundred patents are issued in this country this week, one can understand the unrest competing nations experience for the progress of the inventive skill of the Americans.

Too much sociability often produces a familiarity which becomes bothersome.

Have used Piso's Cure for Consumption nearly two years, and find nothing to compare with it.—Mrs. Morgan, Berkeley, Cal., Sept. 2, 1901.

Some of the dwellings in Honolulu, have lights on the outside as well as in the rooms. Electric lamps are set in the masonry of the walls, thereby throwing a reflection on the lawns, where the residents spend most of their nights.

Red-headed Indians are very rare. One of them, belonging to the Pasmunquoddy tribe's reservation at Pleasant Point, near Eastport, Me., recently died there, aged sixty-nine.

Politician (arranging for music at political meeting)—Isn't that a big price? You may not have to play half a dozen times during the whole evening.

Brass Band Leader—But, my dear sir, we have to sit there and listen to the speeches.—Hit-Rits.

Head to Identify.

"That is Jimmy's hair," said the football player, laying out his trophies after the game, "and this is Billy's nose, and this is Tom's ear, and this eyebrow belongs to young Rusker, but I can't identify this finger to save me.—Baltimore American.

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TEASING AND TORMENTING.

CHAPTER XIX.

I did not go straight home to our dull, gloomy bachelor dwelling place, for I was not in the mood for an hour's soliloquy. I was passing by the house, chewing the bitter end of my reflections, and I turned in to see if any messages were waiting there. The footman told me a person had been with an urgent request that a doctor would go as soon as possible to No. 19 Bollinger street. I did not know the street, or what sort of a locality it was in.

"What kind of a person called?" I asked.

"A woman, sir; not a lady. On foot—pale and dressed. She's been here before, and Dr. Lowry has visited the case twice."

"Very good," I said.

Upon inquiry I found that the place was two miles away, and as our old friend Simmons was still on the calendar, I jumped into his cab, and had him drive me as fast as he could. I wanted a sense of motion, and a change of scene. If I had been in Guernsey I should have mounted Madam, and had another midnight ride round the island. This was a poor substitute for that; but the visit would serve to turn my thoughts from Julia.

We turned at last into a shabby street, recognizable even in the twilight of the scattered lamps as being a place for cheap lodging-houses. There was a light burning in the second-floor windows of No. 19; but all the rest of the front was in darkness. I paid Simmons and dismissed him, saying I would walk home. By the time I turned to knock at the door, it was opened quietly from within. A woman stood in the doorway; I could not see her face, for the candle she had brought with her was on the table behind her; neither was there light enough for her to distinguish mine.

"Are you come from Dr. Lowry's?" she asked.

The voice sounded a familiar one, but I could not for the life of me recall whose it was.

"Yes," I answered, "but I do not know the name of my patient here."

"Dr. Martin Dobree?" she exclaimed.

I recollected her then as the person who had been in search of Olivia. She had fallen back a few paces, and I could now see her face. It was doubtful, as if she hesitated to admit me. Was it possible I had come to attend Olivia's husband?

"I don't know whatever to do!" she ejaculated; "he is very ill to-night, but I don't think he ought to see you—I don't think he would."

"I am not anxious to attend him. I came here simply because my friend is out of town, and he wishes to see me. I will see him, and do my best. It rests entirely with himself."

"Will you wait here a few minutes," she asked, "while I see what he will do?"

She left me in the dimly lighted hall. The place was altogether sordid, and dingy, and miserable. At last I heard her step coming down the two flights of stairs, and I went to meet her.